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Summary record of the 19th meeting
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Chairman: Mr. Effah-Apenteng ..... (Ghana)
Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions: Mr. Mselle

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The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

Agenda item 122: Programme budget for the biennium 2000-2001 (*continued*)

Agenda item 133: Administrative and budgetary aspects of the financing of the United Nations peacekeeping operations

Programme budget implications of draft resolution A/C.4/55/L.23: Comprehensive review of the whole question of peacekeeping operations in all their aspects (A/56/478; A/C.5/55/46 and Add.1)

1. **Mr. Mselle** (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions), introducing the report of the Advisory Committee on the implementation of the report of the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations (A/56/478), said that the General Assembly had already appropriated $73.6 million for the support account for the period from 1 July 2001 to 30 June 2002. The additional estimate, for the implementation of the Panel's recommendations, was $25.8 million, of which $2.7 million was for the regular budget. The biennial full cost for the regular budget was $3.7 million and the annual full cost for the support account was $33.5 million. Total annual full support expenditure was therefore $107.1 million. Excluding regular budget and field support, the latter amount was approximately 3.6 per cent of the projected level of peacekeeping expenditure. The Secretary-General requested a total of 216 posts, of which nine were under the regular budget. Those resources did not include estimates for the strategic reserve to build a rapid deployment capacity. A report would be submitted after the Secretary-General had completed the consultations requested by the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations.

2. The Advisory Committee recommended $1.6 million for the regular budget and $16.2 million for the support account. It further recommended 7 posts under the regular budget and 122 under the support account, of which 92 were for the Department of Peacekeeping Operations. The Advisory Committee's recommendations were based on the principle that support resources were primarily to establish additional capacity at Headquarters to manage peacekeeping operations in the field. That capacity and the level of resources and related posts must be regularly reviewed to justify the continuing need for them. To that end, the Advisory Committee had made a number of observations and recommendations on the need to refine the method for establishing support estimates. Many of the Advisory Committee's comments would also apply when regular budget estimates were being prepared.

3. The Advisory Committee had recognized the need to strengthen the Department of Peacekeeping Operations with temporary staff capacity to manage the reform process. With respect to other departments, it had taken account of the staff and non-staff resources already available and had recommended regular budget staff resources for the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights. The Advisory Committee had regularly supported requests for human rights staff and non-staff resources in peacekeeping budgets. For the period ending 30 June 2002, a total of 190 posts were available from assessed and extrabudgetary sources for human rights activities in field missions.

4. The Advisory Committee had also recommended a strengthening of the investigation and resident audit services of the Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) and had stressed the need to ensure that all available posts for resident auditors were filled expeditiously. It had requested the United Nations Board of Auditors to evaluate the resident audit service and was awaiting the findings. In the meantime, the Advisory Committee wished to draw attention to its comments in paragraph 94 of its report (A/56/478) concerning the handling of resident audit reports and the evaluation of the performance of resident auditors.

5. **Mr. Halbwachs** (Controller), introducing the statement submitted by the Secretary-General on the programme budget implications of draft resolution A/C.4/55/L.23 (A/C.5/55/46 and Add.1), said that the Secretary-General's comprehensive review of the way in which the Organization planned, deployed, conducted and supported peacekeeping operations contained in his report on the implementation of the recommendations of the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations and the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations (A/55/977), pointed to the need to strengthen significantly a number of core capabilities. The review also contained an assessment of the implications for the Organization of developing the ability to deploy peacekeeping operations fully and effectively within 30 to 90 days of a Security Council resolution and presented an outline of a global strategy

for civilian staffing of peacekeeping operations to address critical shortcomings in the current system. It pointed out that in order to strengthen the core capacities of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and to meet the challenges of rapid and effective deployment, adjustments would be required in the Department's organizational structure and staffing levels. It underlined the need to strengthen the capacities of the Department of Management, the Office of Internal Oversight Services, and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights. The needs identified during the comprehensive review and the proposals and recommendations approved by the Fourth Committee in respect of the areas to be strengthened within the Secretariat would require the reorganization of current structures, the creation of new entities and the strengthening of existing ones, changes that would also require additional resources under the support account for peacekeeping operations for the six-month period from 1 January to 30 June 2000 and under the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2002 -2003.

6. With regard to the restructuring and strengthening of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, the structure of the Office of the Under-Secretary-General would be adjusted to reflect the addition of the position of Director of Management, who would be responsible for overseeing the overhaul and strengthening of the Department's management system and procedures and for directing the work of the Peacekeeping Best Practices Unit. The latter Unit was intended to be at the heart of an enhanced system by which the Organization learnt from its peacekeeping experience and developed policies, procedures and related operational tools for incorporation into the planning and conduct of ongoing and future missions. The Mine Action Service would be upgraded to Division status and would report directly to the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations. The Office of Logistics, Management and Mine Action would be renamed the Office of Mission Support and the current Field Administration and Logistics Division would be divided into two separate Divisions, the Administrative Support Division and the Logistics Support Division. For its part, the Personnel Management and Support Service was to be significantly restructured and the former Logistics and Communications Service would become the Logistics Support Division. The current five sections within the former Logistics and Communications Service would be upgraded to the status of a Service in the new Logistics Support Division. Lastly, the Civilian Police Division would include a new Unit to provide advice on criminal law and judicial issues. Additional resources for the Department of Peacekeeping Operations financed from the support account for the financial period from 1 July 2001 to 30 June 2002 were estimated at $15,034,700, including 129 posts.

7. The main findings of the comprehensive review confirmed that, in the absence of an effective secretariat, the Executive Committee on Peace and Security could not function as an instrument of policy development, decision-making and management. The Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations had acknowledged the need and had recommended that the Secretary-General should consider the establishment of a small support secretariat to service the Executive Committee. Three posts were suggested for that secretariat.

8. To date, the Department of Management had not been provided with additional resources to absorb the additional workload created by the surge in peacekeeping operations since mid-1999. The Department would therefore need strengthening to enable it to provide effective Headquarters support in a number of areas for the current level of peacekeeping. The Treasury had not been able to introduce safer payment mechanisms in peacekeeping missions, while the Contributions Service needed to be strengthened in order to improve the timeliness of assessment letters and the processing of receipts, which was particularly labour-intensive for peacekeeping missions with multiple mandate periods. With the establishment of new and more complex peacekeeping operations and the concomitant liquidation of other missions, the Accounts Division had had to focus on coping with the volume of accounting transactions in the most urgent and critical areas, thereby creating backlogs in other areas. It was proposed that the Peacekeeping Financing Division should be strengthened to enable it to meet increased workload demands.

9. In the area of human resources management, it was proposed that the Rules and Regulations Unit, the Operational Services Division and the Specialist Services Division should be strengthened. Additional resources were also proposed for the Medical Services Division to enable it to provide health services for staff of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations at Headquarters or en route to peacekeeping missions. Since 1993, no additional resources had been approved

for the Division from the support account. Resources were also required to meet security training needs prior to the deployment of security officers. In addition, staffing and other resources in the areas of information technology and procurement services had been inadequate to handle the increased workload and would be strengthened. Additional resources for the Department of Management as a whole were estimated at $6.7 million, including 61 new posts.

10. In order to enable the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights to provide adequate support to the broader United Nations human rights programme, it was necessary to strengthen its capacity for backstopping the increasing number of peacekeeping operations with human rights components. Resources proposed for the support account were estimated at $949,000, including nine posts, while additional resources proposed for the Office for the programme budget for the biennium 2002-2003 were estimated at $1,890,300 net, including six posts.

11. The Office of Internal Oversight Services required strengthening at Headquarters to enable it to analyse management control systems and administrative procedures more comprehensively, respond to internal management consultancy requests from the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and improve the quality and coverage of internal oversight services for peacekeeping operations. Additional resources proposed for the support account for the period from 1 July 2001 to 30 June 2002 were estimated at $279,500, including four new posts.

12. For its part, the Office of the United Nations Security Coordinator lacked the staff to participate fully in the mission planning process or to address the entire spectrum of peacekeeping security implications and requirements. Consequently, the additional resources proposed for the support account for the financial period from 1 July 2001 to 30 June 2002 were estimated at $191,500, including the establishment of four new posts.

13. The overall resources proposed therefore consisted of $2.7 million of the regular budget for the biennium 2002-2003 and $23.1 million for the support account for the period from 1 January to 30 June 2002. An additional 216 posts had been identified, of which 9 related to the regular budget and 207 to the support account.

14. **Mr. De Ruyt** (Belgium), speaking on behalf of the European Union and the associated countries Bulgaria, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Romania, Slovenia and Turkey, said that peacekeeping was a core function of the United Nations, and the European Union's large share of the financing of peacekeeping operations and its contribution to the training of peacekeeping personnel were a further testament to its unwavering commitment to that cause.

15. Peacekeeping was a global effort and the Organization's structure and staffing must be enhanced to enable it to perform its crucial and multifaceted task. At the same time, however, the Organization's support for conflict resolution was but one of its many tasks. United Nations action to foster development was another complementary priority and the implementation of the recommendations that had been made following the comprehensive review of the whole question of peacekeeping operations in all their aspects and the recommendations contained in the report of the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations (A/55/502) were in no way a substitute for efforts to assist development.

16. The European Union concurred with the Secretary-General that additional resources and better use of existing resources were needed to improve the functioning of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations. In that connection, the work done by the General Assembly the previous year to address the most urgent of the recommendations of the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations was an important step in the right direction. The European Union supported the concept of a strategic reserve at the United Nations Logistics Base at Brindisi as a significant element in enhancing the Organization's ability to discharge its peacekeeping responsibilities, and requested the Secretary-General to submit proposals for the required resources as early as possible.

17. The European Union nevertheless remained particularly attached to such important issues as the need for enhanced coordination between the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and other departments, gender mainstreaming, human rights, international humanitarian law and the Peacekeeping Best Practices Unit. The Fifth Committee's budgetary decisions should reflect the political consensus reached in the Fourth Committee. The Union noted with great interest the conclusions and recommendations contained in the report of the Advisory Committee. Indeed, it appreciated the budgetary rigour shown by the Advisory Committee and its efforts to formulate

recommendations aimed at facilitating negotiations in the Fifth Committee.

18. **Mr. Dauth** (Australia), speaking also on behalf of Canada and New Zealand, said that the steps that had been taken to date to reform peacekeeping operations had been historic ones. Member States had broadly supported the practical recommendations made by the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations and the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations by approving emergency resources for those areas of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations that were most urgently in need of additional posts. The comprehensive managerial review that had followed had identified a number of core capabilities that needed strengthening, including management practices, planning and policy-making, internal coordination, rapid deployment and mission support. It was now for the Assembly to provide the resources required to implement those conclusions and the recommendations contained in the report of the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations, in accordance with the implementation plan proposed by the Secretary-General. The Advisory Committee had recommended approval of 129 of the 216 posts that had been requested by the Secretary-General. While the delegations on whose behalf he spoke welcomed the Advisory Committee's rigour, they believed that a somewhat higher level than 129 was warranted and that the final number agreed upon should be filled expeditiously.

19. The Advisory Committee's emphasis on the need to improve the presentation of support account resource requests was heartening and consistent with the view that the Organization must become more focused on performance and results.

20. There were six issues of particular concern. First, the resources that had been requested by the Secretary-General and recommended by the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations for the Peacekeeping Best Practices Unit should be approved. Second, the elaboration of United Nations guidelines in such sectors as the judiciary, corrections and interim criminal procedures should be completed. Third, resources should be approved to provide gender expertise in the Department of Peacekeeping Operations in order to translate the gender mainstreaming mandate into practice. Fourth, there was a need for resources at Headquarters to coordinate and support the work of the human rights components of peacekeeping operations. Fifth, special attention should be paid to the issue of integration between information technology developments in the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the Secretariat as a whole; before additional resources were committed to information technology, assurances were needed that the commitments were taking place within a well-thought-out strategic framework. Lastly, the impact on the Department's operational effectiveness of the scattering of the staff of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations over a number of different physical locations was a matter of concern. The Department's personnel currently operated from five different buildings and on six different floors within the Secretariat building alone. Those conditions exacerbated the lack of cohesiveness, poor internal coordination and ineffective management that had been highlighted in the comprehensive review. The Secretariat should therefore pursue options for addressing the problem.

Organization of work

21. **Mr. Nakkari** (Syrian Arab Republic) recalled that it had been agreed in the informal consultations the previous week that the Committee should resume the informal consultations during the current week by first completing consideration of issues related to General Assembly affairs and conference services. In keeping with the understanding reached, discussion of pending issues should therefore be completed before consideration of part II of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2002-2003 was taken up.

22. **Mr. Ramos** (Portugal), speaking as Coordinator of the informal consultations on agenda item 123, said that it was his clear recollection that participants in the informal consultations had agreed to resume their consultations during the current week by taking up part II of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2002-2003, on the understanding that members could revert to any outstanding issues under part I.

23. **Mr. Nakkari** (Syrian Arab Republic) said that it would not be possible for his delegation in the future to move on to other parts of the proposed programme budget until all queries under the current part had been cleared up. Moreover, written replies to questions should not take the place of open debates in which all delegations were free to participate.

24. **Mr. Orr** (Canada) said that the Committee should discourage the practice of negotiating in formal meeting the procedures governing informal

consultations. A great deal of work remained to be done and progress should not be held up until answers to queries were received from the Secretariat.

25. **The Chairman** said that, even though the Committee operated by consensus, he hoped that a spirit of pragmatism would prevail so that the work of the Committee could go forward.

The meeting rose at 11.05 a.m.